



**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS  
MARYLAND JUDICIAL CENTER  
580 TAYLOR AVENUE  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

April 9, 2008

Re: RFP K08-2094-30, Web-Based Electronic Bar Application System

**AMENDMENT # 1**

Dear Interested Parties,

A pre-bid meeting for the above referenced RFP was held on April 1, 2008. The following persons were in attendance:

Tim Thompson (Obverse), David Smith (Compuware), Stacey Friedman (Learning Systems Intl), Rick Meggison (Nortel Gov. Solutions), Diann Turner (Netlink Resource Group), Renee Bresnie (SAIC), Khalil Zebdi (ASSYST), Orcun Akca (ILG), Shane Smutz (Mythics, Inc.), Mylita Jacob, Mary Riehl, Bob Bruchalski (AOC JIS), Bedford Bentley (Bd Of Law Examiners), Larry Jones, (Md. Court of Appeals MBE), Bernard Miles (AOC Procurement).

1. A minority business enterprise subcontract participation goal of fifteen percent (15%) of the total contract amount has now been established for this procurement. Respondents to this solicitation are required to submit as part of their bid/proposal package the forms listed in Section I, T. Copies of the forms are attached.

2. The following consists of questions raised by participants at the pre-bid conference on 04/01/08 and the answers herein provided by the Maryland Judiciary.

**Who built the existing system?**

This was an in-house system

**Who did the study to do this project and are they prohibited from bidding on it?**

Thomas & Herbert did the study and is prohibited from bidding on this project.

**Will JIS assign a project manager to oversee the application?**

Possibly.

**Is there any urgency to build this system in a certain time and will the timeline be a part of the evaluation?**

The Maryland Judiciary expects the system to be tested, fully functional, and in production within one year after contract award. Each bidder shall specify its estimate of the duration of each phase of the project.

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**How big is the user community?**

Currently have 7 full-time users in the Board Of Law Examiners Office and will be adding 2 more for a total of 9.

**What is the deadline for written questions?**

5 days before due date

**What platform should be used for this?**

Java (J2EE) is preferred, but other platforms may be suggested.

**What document imaging system is currently being used?**

None currently. The successful vendor is expected to provide. Pricing must be included in proposal.

**Will the hosting service be mandated by the AOC or open to a hosting option?**

Application will be hosted by the AOC

**Will there be DB administrative support available or must the contractor have their own?**

The contractor will have their own DB Administrative support. Assuming conformance to the platform preferred by JIS, the contractor will work in conjunction with the DBA(s) who supports the JIS environment. Regardless of platform, the contractor is responsible for insuring that the database design and configurations are in accordance with the JIS standards and must coordinate a review prior to deployment.

**What is the expected duration of Help Desk Support to be provided by the vendor?**

Revised language on page 39 of the RFP, Section E. Training and Maintenance/Support:

Contractor must provide training for the staff members of the State Board of Law Examiners. Training and on-site user support is to be incorporated during the User Acceptance Testing period and for a minimum of 30 days after production deployment. A Post production support plan, beyond the initial 30-day period, must be fully addressed in your proposal. The support plan is to include a "Help Desk" person or persons who can be contacted for support during business hours, license and software maintenance/enhancement support.

Additional language to be included on page 39 of the RFP, Section E. Training and Maintenance/Support:

Additional language to be included on page 39 of the RFP, Section E.  
Training and Maintenance/Support:

**Transition Plan**

A transition plan is to be provided clearly explaining the final solution, holding knowledge transfer meetings with key stakeholders to explain the system in detail and provide supporting documentation, defining system/software components, data files, security constraints and business rules, etc. The transition plan should outline and fully explain activities, timeline, roles and desired outcomes to ensure the resulting solution fully meets the Maryland State Board of Law Examiners needs based on measurable outcomes tracked during the pilot phase.

Additional language to be included on page 39 of the RFP, Section F., subsections 3. Testing:

By defining performance metrics, JIS will be able to measure the successes/failures of the final system prior to accepting the final system from the vendor. This allow JIS to ensure that the system is operational in the JIS production environment, assess and mitigate risks, assess the volume of users that can successfully access the system, assess the number of bar examination applications that can be processed successfully, assess system availability, to name a few.

The Contractor shall define and propose performance metrics (e.g. assess volume of users that can successfully access the system, assess the number of bar examination applications that can be processed successfully, assess system availability) and mechanisms for tracking and reporting results during the pilot phase. These metrics will be tracked and used for system evaluation purposes. Per the discretion of JIS, vendor may be required to make system modifications and adjustments.

**What is the expected system availability?**

The application should be available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week excluding maintenance downtime, much like many websites and should be designed and implemented accordingly. However, it should be understood that the while the system contains important and sensitive information, it is not a mission critical system. Should the application experience an unexpected outage, service is to be restored within 24 hours. In addition, the infrastructure (data center) provided by the AOC, which will support this application, has fail-over and redundant capabilities (e.g. UPS, generator, load balancer, multiple application and database servers).

Additional language to be included on page 39 of the RFP, Section F., subsections 2. Documentation:

User Manuals should be included in the documentation provided.

3. The following consists of written questions submitted to the Procurement Department following the pre-bid meeting.

**Has JIS performed any research for a COTS solution for eBAR application?**

JIS reviewed the Bar Admissions process for the other 49 states to determine what is currently in use and available. JIS was unable to verify if there are any COTS solutions currently in use.

**Would JIS entertain COTS solution?**

Yes.

**Does JIS have the Development and Testing platform established for this eBAR application initiative?**

JIS has a development and a testing environment aligned with the “Preferred Platform” outlined on page 37 of the RFP.

**Does the Bar Examination/Testing reside with in JIS enterprise environment?**

This question is unclear. If the question is whether or not testing is to be performed in the JIS enterprise environment, then the answer is yes. Especially, User Acceptance Testing, which is to be performed periodically throughout the development cycle.

**Does the eBAR application require a network interface to Bar Examination system?**

The eBar application must be fully integrated with the Bar Examination system.

**What is the size of the data or how many records of the database that needs to be converted and indexed with unique number to new system?**

There are approximately 36,000 applicant header records and 78,500 petition records. The applicant header records are to be indexed with unique numbers. The petition records are requests to sit for a bar exam. Since a bar applicant can re-petition to sit for exam, should he/she be unsuccessful in their first attempt, an applicant can be associated with one or more of these records.

**Does the current BAR application system use email address as check to prevent duplicate records? CPWR has identified concerns using email address a check duplicate applications. One is that some applicants may have multiple emails accounts and may change emails during application review process.**

The current system does not use email to prevent duplicate records. It uses SSN. When the SSN is not provided, a unique number is generated.

The eBar system will use email addresses for correspondence and account

creation. The eBar system will allow the bar applicant to enter multiple email addresses. Should the bar applicant forget or lose his/her account information, the system should allow the applicant to retrieve it using an email address associated with the account. Should the applicant change his email address during the review process, and does not have his/her account information, he/she may send a letter to the State Board of Law Examiners requesting the email address be updated.

**Under Non-Attorney there a time period for tracking number of times a non-attorney takes?**

The system should provide for a non-attorney to take the exam up to 99 times.

**Further would JIS not want to track the number of applications received from all applicants whether attorneys or not?**

Yes, JIS would want to track the number of applications received from both attorneys and non-attorneys and the number of times each takes the exam.

An attorney may take the exam up to 4 times, but cannot retake the exam after the fourth failure.

A non-attorney may take the exam up to 3 times without special permission. After the third failure, the non-attorney may be required to complete additional education as a condition for subsequently retaking the exam.

**Test Accommodations (page 14) does the existing Bar Exam application system hold this applicant medical information? If so does this information fall under the Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA") and Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information ("Privacy Rule") published December 28, 2000. HHS\_OCR - 65 FR 82462.**

The existing Bar Exam application does not store applicant medical information.

**Is the Exam system for eBAR a seating system only? If not please provide details of current Exam system process and procedures? As well as interfaces to current eBAR exam application system? And any enhancements anticipated with the development and implementation of the new eBAR application.**

The present system does not permit electronic submission of the application. All data is manually entered. EBar will permit electronic submission and capture of application data.

The functions and desired enhancements of the exam application system are described on pages 8 to 35 of the RFP.

**Please describe the information required to be applied to eBAR applicant record from CJIS background check?**

CJIS is the Maryland Criminal Justice Information System. The CJIS information to be entered in the eBar record include the dates, descriptions, codes, and dispositions which comprise each reported incident in the CJIS system

**Please describe in detail the accounting system interfaces?**

The eBar system shall capture the fee payment and deposit information and generate the documentation as outlined on page 34.

The eBar system shall allow direct input of fee payment and deposit information into the AOC finance system.

**What are the differences in capacity for the different exam session rooms?**

The standard administration of the examination is conducted in large halls in which 300 to 1,700 applicants may be seated. If the Baltimore Convention Center is available, all of these applicants are seated in one hall. If not, 5 or more different examination locations and halls may be required, each with a different seating capacity. Applicants who handwrite the examination must be grouped together separately from applicants who use laptop computers for the written test. Hence, within each hall, there will be separate “rooms” for handwriters and laptop users.

Non-standard test administration applies to applicants who have disabilities requiring extra time, physical isolation, and other special arrangements. It may be necessary to use as many as 30 rooms to seat up to 100 applicants in this category. Handwriters and laptop users in this category will be seated in different rooms.

Other test accommodations may involve the use of court reporters, which would require additional rooms.

**The system shall allow an applicant to apply for a law school waiver if his / her school is not ABA certified but the applicant has been admitted to the Bar of another state – how is this checked?**

The eBar system must be populated with the names and addresses of all ABA approved law schools. If an applicant is not a graduate of an ABA approved law school, the eBar system must prompt the applicant to apply for a waiver. The waiver application requires certified educational documents that must be submitted in paper form and manually reviewed by office analysts.

**Does the existing system have a direct link to CJIS? Does eBAR application need to be connect to CJIS system, Or does just have to store information provided by an external access? How is the interface to this system from Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS)?**

The existing system does not have a direct link to CJIS. The eBar application does not need to connect to the CJIS system. A system administrator will login to the CJIS system and retrieve the information and then manually update the bar applicant information in the eBar system.

**Is NCBE an external interface?**

Yes. The NCBE is responsible for the MBE scores captured in the general bar exam and the Character Report submitted by Out-of-State Attorneys. The system in use by the NCBE allows electronic transmissions of this information.

**The system shall validate that the law school listed by a non-attorney is ABA approved – Can JIS provide/ indentify processes on how validation is performed today?**

All ABA approved law schools are to be input into the system. All law schools entered on a bar application will be validated against this information.

In the current system, the ABA law schools are stored on the system and a staff member verifies that any law school entered on a bar application appears on that list.

**The system shall integrate and leverage the exiting JIS infrastructure – What infrastructure already exists in JIS?**

For J2EE applications (see also Preferable Platform listed on page 37):

The environment consists of two application servers (Oracle iAS v10g), load balanced by a CISCO 1100, with a single Oracle database (v10g) running on an IBM P5 using Unix-AIX v5.3 operating system leveraging NetApp for data storage and capacity planning.

All equipment is in a climate controlled computer room, with backup generator power if needed. Tape backups are performed regularly and sent offsite.

**Letter Generator (Mass and Individual) – needs more info.**

In general, the system will allow administrators to generate letters, single and or multiple, using the letter templates outlined in “Templates for Letter Generation” on page 22. These letters should incorporate various data elements as outlined in on page 31, “Letter Generator (Mass and Individual).”

This functionality would be similar to “canned reports”, where parameters are entered and data is retrieved from the database and displayed on the report. However, the report in question would actually be a letter.

**Need more info on all the systems (external and internal) interfaces.**

Please specify what additional information is being requested.

These are the only changes contemplated by Amendment #1. All other specifications, terms and conditions of the Request for Proposals remain the same.

Sincerely,

Bernard M. Miles  
Deputy Director of Procurement  
and Contract Administration